

REMARKS

Reconsideration of pending claims 1-24 is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 16, 18, 20, 21 and 22 were rejected as being anticipated by U.S. patent No. 5,969,433 to Maggiora et al.

Claim 1 features a method of monitoring uncoupling of a vehicle trailer. In the method, a planned trailer uncoupling area is defined. Then the method determines whether the trailer has been uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area. When it is determined that the trailer is uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area the method determines the location of the trailer.

Page 5, item 12 of the Office Action, states that “Maggiora et al. discloses uncoupling *outside of a planned area* on lines 55-59, on column 7.” (emphasis added) Applicant respectfully disagrees. Column 7, lines 55-59 state: “However, when a trailer has been disconnected, this may indicate that the trailer or truck is being stolen, and thus, upon disconnection, controller 12 in truck 106 will send an unauthorized disconnect message to control center.” While it is true that the system disclosed by Maggiora et al. discloses detecting that the trailer has been disconnected, it does not disclose *detecting when the trailer is uncoupled outside a planned uncoupling area*. Applicant’s attorney, Ken Smith, conducted an interview with Examiner Brian Broadhead on November 25, 2003 to point out that lines 55-59 of column 7 do not disclose detecting uncoupling outside a planned uncoupling area as is asserted in the Office Action.

The Maggiora et al. patent does not show or suggest defining a planned trailer uncoupling area or determining that a trailer is uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area as required by claim 1. Claim 1 is in condition for allowance.

Claim 3 depends upon and is allowable like claim 1 and further features periodically transmitting the location of the tractor or the trailer *only* when it is determined that the tractor or the trailer has moved. Lines 35-41 of column 3 do not disclose periodically transmitting the location of the tractor or the trailer *only* when it is determined that the tractor or the trailer has moved as asserted in the Office Action. Rather, lines 29-41, col. 3 of the Maggiora patent discloses that the vehicle (remote site) 12 transmits response messages 26 in response to receiving polling messages 22 from transmit sites 16. The times of receipt of the response messages are used to resolve the location of the vehicle. The transmission of the response messages is not dependent upon movement of the tractor or the trailer as is required by claim 3, but instead is dependent on receiving polling messages from transmit sites. Claim 3 is in condition for allowance.

Claims 5 and 7 depend upon claim 1 and are also in condition for allowance.

Claim 9 features a method of monitoring uncoupling of a vehicle trailer. In the method, a planned trailer uncoupling area is defined. The method determines when the trailer is uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area and automatically secures the trailer when it is uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area.

As is explained in the analysis of claim 1, the Maggiora et al. patent does not show or suggest determining whether a trailer has been uncoupled outside a planned uncoupling area as asserted in the Office Action. Claim 9 is in condition for allowance.

Claims 10 and 11 depend from claim 9 and are also in condition for allowance.

Claim 13 features an apparatus for monitoring uncoupling of a vehicle trailer. The apparatus of claim 13 includes a vehicle computer and a global positioning system. The vehicle computer is programmed to define a planned trailer uncoupling area. The global positioning system is coupled to the computer for determining the location of the trailer. The vehicle computer is programmed to determine that the trailer has been uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area.

The Maggiora et al. patent does not disclose or suggest a vehicle computer that is programmed to define a planned trailer uncoupling area and determine that the trailer has been uncoupled outside the programmed planned uncoupling area. Claim 13 is not anticipated by the Maggiora et al. patent.

Claims 16 and 18 depend from claim 13 and are also in condition for allowance.

Claim 20 features an apparatus for monitoring a vehicle trailer uncoupling. One feature of claim 20 is a vehicle computer programmed to define a planned trailer uncoupling area, to determine that the trailer has been uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area, and to automatically secure the trailer when the trailer has been uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area.

The Maggiora et al. patent does not disclose or suggest a vehicle computer that is programmed to define a planned trailer uncoupling area or determine that the trailer has been uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area. Claim 20 is in condition for allowance.

Claims 21 and 22 depend from claim 20 and are also in condition for allowance.

Claim 24 features a method of monitoring a vehicle trailer uncoupling. In the method a planned trailer uncoupling area is defined. When it is determined that the trailer has been

uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area, the method determines the location of the trailer.

Claim 24 is not anticipated by the Maggiora patent, because the Maggiora patent does not disclose defining a planned trailer uncoupling area or determining that a trailer has been uncoupled outside the planned trailer uncoupling area.

Claim Rejections 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 2, 14, and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Maggiora et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,825,283 to Camhi.

Claim 2 features a method of monitoring uncoupling of a vehicle trailer. In the method, a planned trailer uncoupling area is defined. When it is determined that the trailer has been uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area, the method determines the location of the trailer with a global positioning system and takes a picture of a vehicle driver.

Claim 2 is not obvious in view of the Maggiora and Camhi patents, because these patents do not show or suggest defining a planned uncoupling area or taking a picture of a driver when it is determined that a trailer has been uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area. The Office Action states at page 4, item 11 that the Camhi patent teaches taking a picture *of the driver* on lines 1-5 of column 24. Lines 1-4 of column 24 state:

Furthermore, the present invention may be coupled to interact automatically or manually enable a video recording system to record a visual record of the events. Enablement of the video recording means may be facilitated by an out of boundary condition. The video information may then be used to identify criminals involved in a crime, as well as evidence in court.

During the interview of November 25, 2003, Applicant's attorney, Ken Smith, pointed out that this recitation does not disclose taking a picture of the driver as asserted in the Office Action. Examiner Brian Broadhead indicated that lines 1-4 of column 24 teach taking a picture

of the driver when read in the context of column 23. Applicant has thoroughly reviewed column 23 and finds no showing or suggestion of the taking a picture of a driver required by claim 2. Claim 2 is in condition for allowance.

Claim 14 features an apparatus for monitoring uncoupling of a vehicle trailer. The apparatus includes a vehicle computer, a global positioning system, and a camera. The vehicle computer is programmed to define a planned trailer uncoupling area. The global positioning system is coupled to the computer for determining a location of the trailer. The computer is programmed to determine that the trailer has been uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area. The camera is coupled to the computer for taking a picture of the driver when it is determined that the trailer has been uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area.

Claim 14 is not obvious in view of the Maggiora and Camhi patents, because these patents do not show or suggest a computer programmed to define a planned uncoupling area or a camera coupled to the computer that takes a picture of a driver when the computer determines that a trailer has been uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area. Claim 14 is in condition for allowance.

Claim 19 depends from claim 14 and is also in condition for allowance.

Claims 4 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Maggiora et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,917,433 to Keillor et al.

Claim 4 depends from claim 1 which requires defining a planned trailer uncoupling area and determining whether the trailer has been uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area. Neither the Maggiora et al. patent nor the Keillor et al. patent disclose or suggest these claim limitations. Claim 4 is in condition for allowance.

Claim 15 features an apparatus for monitoring uncoupling of a vehicle trailer. The apparatus includes a vehicle computer, a global positioning system, and a trailer battery backup. The vehicle computer is programmed to define a planned trailer uncoupling area. The global positioning system is coupled to the computer for determining a location of the trailer. The computer is programmed to determine when the trailer has been uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area. The trailer battery backup is controlled by the computer to activate the battery backup when the trailer has been uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area.

The Maggiora et al. and Keillor et al. patents do not show or suggest a vehicle computer that is programmed to define a planned trailer uncoupling area or a vehicle computer that activates a trailer battery backup when the vehicle computer determines that the trailer has been uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area. Claim 15 is in condition for allowance.

Claims 6 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Maggiora et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,625,335 to Kelly.

Since claim 6 depends from claim 1, claim 6 requires defining a planned trailer uncoupling area is defined and determining whether the trailer has been uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area. The Maggiora et al. and the Kelly patents do not disclose or suggest these claim limitations. Claim 6 is in condition for allowance.

Claim 17 features an apparatus for monitoring a vehicle trailer uncoupling that includes a vehicle computer, a global positioning system, and a fifth wheel having a lock. The vehicle computer is programmed to define a planned trailer uncoupling area. The global positioning system is coupled to the computer for determining a location of the trailer. The computer is programmed to determine that the trailer has been uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area. The computer is also programmed to activate the lock on the fifth wheel when the trailer

has been uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area.

The Maggiora et al. and Kelly patents do not show or suggest a vehicle computer that is programmed to define a planned trailer uncoupling area or a vehicle computer that activates the lock on the fifth wheel when the trailer has been uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area. Claim 17 is in condition for allowance.

Claims 8, 12, and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Maggiora et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,942,971 to Fauci et al.

Claim 8 depends from claim 1, and therefore requires defining a planned trailer uncoupling area is defined and determining whether the trailer has been uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area. The Maggiora et al. and the Fauci et al. patents do not disclose or suggest these claim limitations. Claim 8 is in condition for allowance.

Claim 12 features a method of monitoring uncoupling of a vehicle trailer. The method includes the steps of defining a planned trailer uncoupling area, determining that the trailer has been uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area, and automatically securing the trailer by deflating a tire of the trailer.

The Maggiora et al. and Fauci et al. patents do not disclose or suggest defining a planned trailer uncoupling area or determining that the trailer has been uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area. Claim 12 is in condition for allowance.

Claim 23 features an apparatus for monitoring uncoupling of a vehicle trailer that includes a vehicle computer and a global positioning system. The vehicle computer is programmed to define a planned trailer uncoupling area, determine that the trailer has been uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area, and automatically secure the trailer by deflating

tires of the trailer when trailer has been uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area.

The Maggiora et al. and Fauci et al. patents do not disclose a vehicle computer that is programmed to define a planned trailer uncoupling area or a vehicle computer that deflates tires of the trailer when the computer determines that the trailer has been uncoupled outside the planned uncoupling area. Claim 23 is in condition for allowance.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-0630 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kenneth J. Smith
Reg. No. 45,115

Telephone: (216) 241-6700
Facsimile: (216) 241-8151